

operations in the Mediterranean, 1694-1695, escaped their notice. Macaulay devotes a couple of paragraphs to this expedition.¹ He relates how the progress of the French arms in Spain was stopped by the appearance of the English fleet in 1694. Palamos and Gerona had fallen before the combined action of the French armies and squadrons.

' Barcelona would in all probability have fallen, had the French Admirals learned that the conqueror of La Hogue was approaching. They instantly quitted the coast of Catalonia, and never thought themselves safe till they had taken shelter under the batteries of Toulon/

Instead of returning home early in the autumn, the English fleet wintered at Cadiz and returned to the Mediterranean

again in the spring of 1695. ' During the whole summer

Russell was the undisputed master of the Mediterranean, passed and repassed between Spain and Italy, bombarded

Palamos, spread terror along the whole coast of Provence,

and kept the French fleet imprisoned in the harbour of

Toulon/ ² But though Macaulay states these facts he does not appreciate or explain their strategic significance.

That was pointed out by Admiral Colomb ³ and is

developed in Julian Corbett's book on England in the Mediterranean.

Mr. Corbett's conclusions ⁴ are as follows : The naval strategy of the first few years of the reign must

be con-
demned. During the early period of the war
the English
fleet was employed in trying to obtain the
command of the
Narrow Seas in order to secure the English
coasts from
invasion and to recover Ireland. Even after
Russell's
victory at La Hogue had given William the
command of
the Narrow Seas, it was only used in the old
way—in

¹ V, 2442 (xx), 2452-4 ; 2538 (xxi). ² V, 2538 (**xxi**).

³ Naval Warfare, p. 271.

⁴ **Chap. 26.**